

EPA Emergency Response GIS Projects: Supporting Emergency Responders and EPA Area Contingency Plans

Background

As the Nation's largest water, earth, biological science and civilian mapping agency, the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) works in cooperation with more than 2,000 organizations across the country to provide reliable and impartial scientific information to resource managers, planners, and other customers. Information is gathered in every state by USGS scientists monitoring hydrological, biological, energy, and mineral resources. USGS monitoring serves to minimize the loss of life and property from natural disasters; to contribute to the sound conservation, economic and physical development of the nation's natural resources; and to enhance the quality of life. As a manager of the Hazardous Substances Superfund, the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is required to designate and prepare emergency response action plans for sub-areas throughout the nation. These plans will assist local emergency offices that have a responsibility to respond to, and contain, oil spills before they become an environmental threat.

Area Contingency Plans

The Oil Pollution Act (OPA) of 1990 required designations for sub-area contingency planning. Based upon risk and environmental concerns, selected environs will be covered by GIS applications that provide support for sub-area contingency planning. Many of these areas are known for their pristine natural areas and resources that may also support community water supplies. In many cases, major highway and railroad transportation routes for hazardous materials are in these areas as well. Without tools to plan for and respond to hazardous spills, these regions will remain vulnerable, and their inhabitants will be unprotected from potential environmental disasters.

Application

The USGS, Rocky Mountain Mapping Center and the EPA's Region VIII Oil Response Program are working together to implement web-based information and decision support applications. Using ArcIMS, the emergency response action plans become visual information tools, accessible to numerous respond-

ers and managers. These password protected applications support accurate and expedient emergency response with digital georeferenced information. Locations of fire stations, hospitals, water access points, oil storage facilities, and transportation routes are immediately accessible. Built-in Internet links provide real-time stream gaging and weather information.

Information:

For information specific to the Emergency Response Applications contact:
USGS
Box 25046, MS 516
Denver, CO 80225-0046
303-202-4333

USGS Mapping Liaisons

<http://mapping.usgs.gov/www/partners/crreps.html>

For information on other USGS products and services, call 1-800-ASK-USGS, use the ASK.USGS fax service, which is available 24 hours a day at 703-648-4888, or visit the Rocky Mountain Mapping Center Web site at <http://rockyweb.cr.usgs.gov>
Please visit the USGS home page at <http://www.usgs.gov>
U.S. Department of the Interior
U.S. Geological Survey
RMMC Information Sheet – EPA Emergency Response Applications



The sub-areas of the EPA Region VIII Emergency Response GIS Project.